



FEMA

FINDING OF NO SIGNIFICANT IMPACT
Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA)
Mount Molly Loop Trail Reroute Project
Capitol State Forest
Thurston County, Washington
FEMA-1734-DR-WA

The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) has applied for Public Assistance funding, through the Washington State Emergency Management Division (EMD), to the U.S. Department of Homeland Security's Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA) to reroute damaged sections of a motorized recreation trail. The purpose of the Public Assistance program is to award financial grants to assist state and local governments, federally recognized Tribal governments, and certain private nonprofit entities with the response and recovery from disasters.

Heavy rains in December 2007 caused landslides in the Potosi Creek drainage in the Capitol State Forest, managed by the DNR, in Thurston County, Washington. The landslides destroyed portions of DNR C-4500 Road and parallel sections (totaling approximately 400 linear feet) of the Mount Molly Loop Trail and another unnamed motorized recreation trail located near the road. The DNR decided not to rebuild the C-4500 Road due to the extremely high cost of repair, and applied for funding for an alternate project, which would reroute the damaged sections of the motorized recreation trail to bypass the landslide areas.

The alternate project is located near Larch Mountain in the northern half of the Capitol Forest, approximately 10 miles southwest of Olympia, Washington. The proposed trail reroute is approximately 1 mile long. The project is located in Township 18 North, Range 4 West, Section 36 and Township 17 North, Range 4 West, Section 1. The beginning and ending coordinates of the trail reroute are: (north end) N 46.998 / W -123.119 and (south end) N 46.993 / W-123.125.

The project would include clearing and grubbing to construct the trail, installation of drainage control structures, installation of a 5- to 6-foot wide by 25- to 30-foot long steel I-beam bridge to cross a seasonal stream (bridge abutments and approaches would be located outside the ordinary high water mark and would avoid any wetlands), and abandonment and rehabilitation of approximately 0.5 mile of the original Mount Molly Loop Trail that was not destroyed in the 2007 landslides. Construction is expected to take 2-3 months using a 4 to 5 person crew. Work will take place during the dry season and include erosion and sediment control and other best management practices (BMPs).

In accordance with the National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA) of 1969, the Council on Environmental Quality (CEQ) regulations implementing NEPA (40 Code of Federal Regulations [CFR] Part 1500 through 1508), and FEMA's implementing regulations (44 CFR 10.9), FEMA prepared a Draft EA to identify and evaluate potential environmental impacts resulting from the alternatives presented in the EA, and to determine whether to prepare an Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) or a Finding of No Significant Impact (FONSI).

Alternatives evaluated in the EA include: the No Action Alternative, and the Preferred Alternative (or Proposed Action) toward which FEMA would contribute funding. One other alternative was considered but not carried forward. After comparing the potential impacts from the alternatives, Alternative B (the Proposed Action) is also the environmentally preferred alternative because less construction would be required compared to the other alternatives, and the active landslide area would be avoided. The Draft EA was available for public comment for 30 days. FEMA received three comment letters (from the Skokomish Tribe, Tacoma Trail Systems, and Washington Department of Ecology) on the Draft EA, none of which required revision of the EA.

CONDITIONS


The proposed project includes numerous Best Management Practices (BMPs) and mitigation measures. In addition, the following conditions apply:

1. The applicant shall obtain all required local, state, and federal permits and approvals prior to implementing the Proposed Action and comply with any and all conditions imposed.
2. Any change to the approved scope of work will require re-evaluation for compliance with NEPA and other laws and Executive Orders.
3. During ground disturbing activities, the applicant will monitor the ground disturbance, and if any potential archaeological resources are discovered, the applicant will immediately cease construction in the area and notify the State Historic Preservation Office and FEMA.

FINDING

Based upon the grant application and Final EA; and in accordance with FEMA's regulations in 44 Code of Federal Regulations (CFR) Part 10 for environmental consideration, including Executive Orders (EO) addressing floodplains (EO 11988), wetlands (EO 11990), and environmental justice (EO 12898), FEMA determined the proposed project will not significantly affect the quality of the natural and human environment. As a result of this FONSI, an EIS will not be prepared (44 CFR Part 10.8) and the project as described in the PA grant application and Final EA may proceed.

APPROVALS



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FEMA Region 10

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Date